

Emmanuel Usher Manual (revised Feb. 2014)

Head Ushers

Diann and Mike Nickelsburg, tutorlatin@verizon.net, phone 467-6829

Church contact: Donna Clark at eec@emmanuelvb.org

Church phone: 499-1271

Scheduling

Ushers serve on Sundays and most other services on a rotating schedule. Three ushers are assigned to serve at the 8:30 and 11:00 o'clock services. No ushers serve at the 7:30 service.

Two ushers can handle an average attendance service, but three ushers can handle all duties more efficiently -- especially at large services.

The monthly usher schedule and the Usher Manual can be found on the Emmanuel Web site, www.emmanuelvb.org in the Worship section. The schedule is also emailed to each usher. Both documents are also kept in the vestibule's left cabinet.

Each month a "Cannots" email is sent to ushers asking them to submit days they cannot usher during the upcoming month. The schedule is published by the first of the month. The contact is: **Diann Nickelsburg, tutorlatin@verizon.net.**

Ushers usually serve no more than once a month, but be prepared to do more during Easter and Christmas and at times when there are an unusual number of "Cannots."

If you swap usher dates after the schedule has been published, it is your responsibility to contact Donna Clark at [<eec@emmanuelvb.org>](mailto:eec@emmanuelvb.org).

Last Minute Changes

If you have a last-minute (Sunday morning) problem and can't usher, please call your co-ushers ASAP and/or the **church office at 499-1271** and ask whoever answers to notify the other assigned ushers of your absence. Co-ushers, if there is a no-show, please contact one of the head ushers (Diann and Mike Nickelsburg, tutorlatin@verizon.net, 467-6829) so they can follow up with the absentee.

Gathering

Remember to wear your Emmanuel name tag.

Arrive early; anticipate special needs. Arrive at the vestibule between 30 and 15 minutes before the service to stuff bulletins and be prepared to greet parishioners.

Unlock the front doors so they can be opened from the outside (The vestry greeter in the office has a key). If weather and winds permit, leave the doors open.

Assemble the church bulletin with the lesson and other inserts. At times the 11:00 bulletin inserts may be different than those for the 8:30 bulletin. Remember also to hand out the children's bulletins.

Emmanuel is our home. Greet your church family as you would hope to be greeted. After the assigned greeter, you may be the second Emmanuel person met by visitors. Your smile will add to the welcome.

Some parishioners arrive early to enjoy a few minutes of quiet and prayer. With this in mind, close the doors to the nave until the crowd starts to enter.

Ushers should personally hand out the appropriate bulletins as people enter. One usher should be in the narthex, another in the vestibule. Do not leave a pile of bulletins on the narthex ledge.

If an overflow crowd is anticipated, be sure that one of the ushers assists with seating. Set out folding chairs if needed. They are in three portable racks, one in the vesting room off the narthex and two others in the parish hall corridor. Each rack holds about 25 chairs.

Ensure that the Altar Guild has placed the communion elements at the left side of the vestibule's counter. If not there, check for them on the credence table next to the altar. Ask clergy if they need to be brought to the vestibule.

Watch for parishioners who enter through the front door, especially those with mobility issues. Ask if they would like communion brought to them at the pew. Take note of where they are sitting.

For the hearing impaired, headphones are available at the electronic console just inside the nave.

Acolytes need to light their torches prior to the processional. Wood matches and propane lighter can be found in the vestibule's right cabinet. Be prepared to assist lighting.

Processional

As the service begins, close the doors to the nave after the procession has passed. You may then seat late arrivals.

Counting of attendees: The church maintains an attendance record to be provided to the Diocese. Be as unobtrusive as possible; do not count when the congregation is in prayer. It's easiest to count when all are sitting. Make the count in the church a few minutes after the service has begun. Count in the parish hall and children's chapel. Every person is to be counted (including clergy, choir, ushers, babies and people in the office, nursery, and parish hall). Use the preprinted purple attendance form, found in the vestibule, to record attendance. Place the total count of all three services in the 11:00 offertory collection bag prior to presentation at the altar.

Offertory

Ushers at 8:30 notify those in the children's chapel during Prayers of the People so the children can be brought into church during the peace. This is a good time to count people in the parish hall.

After the peace and announcements, all three ushers should position themselves in the nave prepared to approach the altar to receive the three offertory plates. If there are not many people in the transepts, two ushers may be enough. Two ushers collect offerings from the left and right transepts. The third usher collects from both sides of the nave. As the ushers finish the transepts, one helps the usher in the nave. Consolidate the contents into the red or green collection bag, found in the vestibule's right cabinet. 11:00 service ushers, don't forget to include the attendance record.

If possible, invite two parishioners to carry the bread and wine. As the offertory hymn begins, one usher carries the offertory plates with the collection bag. At 8:30, two children will also present their offering. The other two ushers or parishioners carry the bread plate and wine carafe. Walk forward in this order: The collection (and children) first in line, then bread plate and wine carafe side-by-side. Stand at the altar with the collection on the right.

The acolytes will be in position receive the offerings. The acolyte on the right will first receive the offering plates. The others will receive the elements. The acolytes should have already put down the kneeling cushions in front of the open altar area. If not, the ushers should put them down at this time.

Communion

As the clergy, lay ministers, acolytes and choir are receiving communion, the ushers will position themselves to guide communicants to the altar. One usher is stationed in the left transept, the second in the right transept. The third usher is positioned at the front of the nave as traffic director.

The choir comes down first. Then begin to direct communicants -- from the right transept to the right altar rail's end, moving to the altar's center; from the left transept from the altar's center to left end.

The ushers, having finished the transepts, will move to the nave to invite communicants from the left and right pews. The third usher in front will direct persons to empty altar spaces and assist those with mobility issues.

Ushers should maintain a steady stream of communicants to the altar. The third usher can predict open spaces by keeping an eye on the altar. Do not allow communicants to kneel between the bread server and wine server, as that will put them out of sequence. Keep them coming! Always have a few people in line. Do not keep the clergy waiting in front of an empty space at the altar.

As the last communicants are being served at the altar, ushers stand by person(s) desiring to be served in their pew. After the person is served, the usher then receives communion at the pew.

The last to be served at the altar are the ushers who are not standing by parishioners being served at their pews. They will pick up the cushions in front of the altar and place them in a single row, three on each side on top of the other cushions.

One usher picks up the offering bag from under the credence table and delivers it to the vestry greeter in the office. The other ushers return to the back of the nave.

Recessional

Ushers will open the nave and right transept doors during the recessional hymn. If weather and wind permit, you may open the exterior doors as well.

One usher should collect bulletins as parishioners leave.

Cleanup

8:30 service ushers should keep turned-in bulletins, including those placed at the right transept door, ensure they are complete and restack them to supplement those for the 11:00 o'clock service. Dispose of incomplete, wrinkled or folded bulletins in the mail room recycling bin. After

the 11 o'clock service, ushers will discard the bulletins in the recycling bin in the office mailroom, NOT in the vestibule trash can.

After the service, **the ushers' duties are not finished**. Ushers should survey all pews to collect scattered bulletins, trash and forgotten belongings. Take unclaimed items to the office. Return hymnals and prayer books to their racks. Ensure that all kneelers are folded up. Hymnals should be placed on their sides, spine up, in front of the ring binders to avoid pressure on the racks. The Bible should be placed in the rack at the center of the pew.

Turn out the vestibule light. Altar Guild members may still be in the church, so leave the nave lights on.

Funerals & Memorial Services

The head usher will call for volunteers for these services.

Check before the service:

- Exterior doors unlocked
- Hand-held mike for an usher to pass for remembrance comments
- Reserved seat signs (extras in the sacristy cupboard)
- Boxes of tissues in the reserved seats
- Bulletins placed in reserved seats for the family

The head usher should also ask the clergy about any unusual aspects of the service that may require the ushers' attention.

The key to ushering at funerals and memorial services is flexibility. Each service is unique, so be prepared to adjust to the wishes of the family and the clergy. If a funeral home is involved, be prepared to accommodate them and have them assist the ushers. There are normally no acolytes, no offertory and sometimes no lay reader. You may have to light the candles on the altar and the torches by Big Bird. Before the service the Altar Guild will place the elements in the sanctuary.

Gathering

Four ushers are necessary at large services. Many attendees may not be from our church and may need direction to their seats, the restrooms, etc. Arrive no later than 30 minutes before the service. For larger services, at least one usher should be present 45 minutes prior to the service.

Invite arrivals to sign the remembrance book in the narthex if one has been placed there. Ask arrivals if they are family, and if so, escort them to the library or rector's office. The head usher will meet the family five minutes before the scheduled start of the service to escort them to their seats.

Be prepared to accommodate late arrivals. If a large attendance is expected, be prepared to place folding chairs first in the transepts, second in the nave, third in the narthex. Follow procedures in the Sanctuary Large Event Seating Plan. Do not place folding chairs in front of the reserved family pews.

The Service

As soon as the service begins, take a rough count and give it to Martha's Ministry in the kitchen so they can ensure that there is enough food for the reception.

If there are remembrances scheduled, the rector will share his remembrance of the deceased and then ask if others would like to share their memories. An usher should have the hand-held microphone available for those who wish to speak.

Communion

If cushions are not put in place by the acolytes or lay readers, ushers should place the cushions during the peace.

When a casket is present in the church, it is usually positioned in front of the altar rail and perpendicular to the center aisle. Be prepared to direct communicants around the casket to the center of the altar.

Order of communion: First direct the family from the nave, next the choir, then the rest of the congregation in the usual order of transepts first and nave last. If there are people in the narthex, include them with those in the right transept.

A special usher lookout is needed to identify visitors who may need to be served at their pews. Try to identify them before the service begins and note where they are sitting.

During communion it is especially important to have one usher stationed at the front of the nave as a traffic director.

Recessional

For services with a casket, the order of departure is: casket first, the family of the deceased second, then the remaining congregation. Ushers and altar guild members should be prepared to fold and remove the pall from the casket as it leaves the church.

When remains are to be interred in our columbarium, the clergy recess first, followed by the family via the transept door. Once the family has left the sanctuary, the rest of the congregation may exit by any and all doors to reach the columbarium. Ushers will be prepared to guide the remaining congregation to the columbarium.

Sanctuary Large Event Seating Plan

Assist in seating people so that all pews are filled. If extra chairs are needed, set them first in the transepts, then in front of the first row of pews in transepts. Do not set up chairs in front of pews reserved for the family at a funeral or wedding.

If more chairs are needed, one column of chairs may be set up in the center aisle. Finally, set up chairs in the narthex as needed. To prevent blocking of the vestibule's exterior doors, no chairs shall be setup in the vestibule.